

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 IO-14 SY-03 CU-04 SIL-01 LAB-06 AID-20

PC-10 OPR-02 DRC-01 /155 W
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R 191353Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8075

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 3037

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS ET SOCI

SUBJECT: GALLA TROUBLE

REF: ADDIS 2952 PARA 5

1. REPORTS FILTERING INTO ADDIS BEGINNING TO SUGGEST FAIRLY EXTENSIVE PATTERN OF DISTURBANCES LAST FEW DAYS IN SOUTHERN SHOA INVOLVING ATTACKS BY GALLA TRIBESMEN ON RURAL PROPERTIES, INCLUDING ARSON AND SLAUGHTER OF LIVESTOCK. WE ALSO HEAR, BUT HAVE YET TO CONFIRM, ABOUT ATTACKS ON INDIVIDUALS. IN THE CONTEXT THEY SEEM LIKELY.

2. DETAILS ON SPECIFICS ARE STILL FRAGMENTARY. IT CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT GALLAS HAVE BURNED (ARMENIAN-OWNED) "BISHOFTU FARMS", SLAUGHTERING LIVESTOCK; NAZARETH AND AWASH STATION AREAS "TENSE" AFTER "INCIDENTS" APPARENTLY RELATING TO EFFORTS GALLA TENANTS REOCCUPY LAND FROM WHICH THEY HAD ALLEGEDLY BEEN EVICTED: AMHARA CHARCOALERS ALONG AREA MAIN ROADS BEING RUN OFF BY BELLIGERENT GALLAS; EXTRA POLICE PROTECTION BEING AFFORDED AT LEAST
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SOME BUSINESSMEN IN AREA (E.G., ELIDCO), AS WELL AS GAS AND POLICE

STATIONS IN BELATI; FRENCH/ARMENIAN FARM TAKEN OVER BY WOLAMO WORKERS WHO HOLDING DIRECTOR AND WIFE HOSTAGE "UNTIL THEIR SALARY DEMANDS (MINIMUM WAGE) MET."

3. SECURITY SERVICES HAVE CONFESSED TO CONSIDERABLE CONCERN OVER SCOPE AND IMPLICATIONS THESE DISTURBANCES SHOULD THEY PERSIST. THEY ALLEGE EVIDENCE THAT HSIU STUDENTS INSTIGATING PROVOCATIONS IN ZUNI, LANGANO AND ADDIS ENVIRONS. ITALIAN AMBASSADOR VOLUNTEERED TO POL COUNSELOR HIS WORRIES, WHICH SAID TO BE SPREADING AMONG FOREIGN PROPERTY OWNERS AND BUSINESSMEN IN ETHIOPIA, WHO SEE RECENT POLITICAL UNREST BODING ILL FOR THEIR INTERESTS HERE.

4. COMMENT: INCIDENTS MAY REPRESENT INITIAL REACTION BY RURAL ELEMENTS TO URBAN POLITICAL FLUX OF LAST FEW WEEKS. IEG WILL HAVE TO MOVE FAST TO CONTAIN/DEFUSE SITUATION AND TO REASSURE BOTH ETHIOPIANS AND FOREIGNERS THAT IT IS ABLE DO SO. IT APPEARS THAT IMPRESSION GAINING GROUND IEG HAS RPT HAS ALREADY AGREED TO VERY SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN MINIMUM WAGE. (CF ADDIS 2676). IF THIS IMPRESSION IS INDEED WIDELY HELD BY WORKERS, THERE MAY BE MORE TROUBLE WHEN FACTS FINALLY COME CLEAR.
WYMAN

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